

Minute note - Cross Party Group on Oil and Gas

Held on Wednesday 14 September, 18:00-19:30

Committee Room 1, the Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

In Attendance

MSPs:

Lewis Macdonald [**Chair**]
Alexander Burnett
Gillian Martin
Liam Kerr
Tavish Scott

Richard Sagar, Recruitment & Employment
Confederation
Robert McCaig, Decom North Sea
Samantha Silvers, TAQA Bratani Ltd
Wullie Wallace, Unite

Non MSPs:

Alex Anderson, Centrica
Alix Thom, Oil & Gas UK
Allan Rae, BP
Allan Smillie, TAQA Bratani Ltd
Christine Currie, OPITO
James McMordie, Office of Ross Thomson MSP
Jill Glennie, EnQuest
John West, Office of Maureen Watt MSP
Lyndsey Croal, Skills Development Scotland
Mark Whittet, Scottish Energy News
Megan Hine, Control Valve Solutions
Neil Michie, Oil & Gas UK (Secretary)
Nick Speed, Centrica
Richard Crossick, Shell

Apologies

MSPs:

Johann Lamont
Ross Thomson

Non-MSPs:

Bill Cattanach, OGA
Christine Jones
James Hamilton, OPITO
James Trolland
Karen Seath, Decom North Sea
Neil Anderson, Ledingham Chalmers LLP
Neville P Howlett, PwC
Shirley Allan, Pinsent Masons LLP
Sylvia Buchan, OGA

At the start of the meeting, the election of the office bearers of the Cross Party Group took place:

- Tavish Scott MSP nominated as Co-Convenor – vote: **Agreed**
- Alexander Burnett MSP nominated as Co-Convenor – vote: **Agreed**
- Lewis Macdonald MSP nominated as Co-Convenor – vote: **Agreed**
- Gillian Martin MSP nominated as Co-Convenor – vote: **Agreed**

As such, Lewis Macdonald MSP, Tavish Scott MSP, Gillian Martin MSP and Alexander Burnett MSP were elected as the group's Co-Convenors. It was agreed that Neil Michie, on behalf of Oil & Gas UK, would continue to provide the secretariat for the group.

Lewis Macdonald MSP (LM) then welcomed MSPs and non-MSP members to the Cross Party Group and opened the meeting with round-table introductions. Lewis then introduced the speakers for the session – Dr Alix Thom (AT), Workforce Engagement & Skills Manager, Oil & Gas UK and Allan Smillie (AS), Telecommunications Technical Authority and Safety Rep, TAQA – and outlined that the meeting would cover workforce engagement in the oil and gas industry.

Dr Thom first outlined that low morale has been an issue in the industry as a result of the global downturn and the subsequent job losses in the sector. AT highlighted that the recent industrial dispute

that had occurred, and outlined the steps industry was taking to improve relations between industry and the unions. AT stressed that while the issues offshore were given prominence, the offshore workforce only accounts for around 10% of the industry's total workforce.

Dr Thom then highlighted the work that Oil & Gas UK is undertaking through its Efficiency Taskforce to produce an industry behaviours charter, and how these existing mechanisms will hopefully be used in the future to improve industry-wide workforce engagement.

Following this, Allan Smillie, Telecommunications Technical Authority Safety Rep for TAQA provided an industry case study on his efforts to improve workforce engagement at TAQA. Allan previously won the Award for Workforce Engagement at the Offshore Safety Awards 2016 for his efforts in reinvigorating TAQA's network of safety representatives into an energised, motivated and actively supported group.

Recognising the potential of a voluntary network, Allan developed a training programme and introduced video conferences to allow reps to share information, experiences and lessons. AS gave an overview of the system he established, whereby reps at TAQA had a safe place to share problems and learn from one another's experiences. Through a points based system that rewarded safety reps, TAQA went from 30 safety reps to 120. AS then outlined his plans moving forward for his initiative, and highlighted that his programme has attracted interest from other operators and major contractors, keen to explore if they can replicate the approach.

LM then moderated a Q&A session, which covered topics such as the Efficiency Taskforce (ETF); job losses; union engagement; the Energy Jobs Taskforce; and industry standardisation.

LM then thanked all attendees for their input, before formally closing the meeting.